

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: AMERICAN BUSINESS CONCERN WITH KIDNAPPING IN
ARGENTINA

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF A LARGE US FIRM DOING BUSINESS IN ARGENTINA CALLED ON AMBASSADOR ARMIN MEYER APRIL 27 TO EXPRESS CONCERN WITH PRESENT WAVE OF KIDNAPPINGS AND SUBSEQUENT PAYMENT OF LARGE RANSOM. REPS MAINTAIN CONTINUED PAYMENT RANSOM COULD FORCE MANY US FIRMS TO SHUT DOWN IN ARGENTINA AND PRESENTED DEPARTMENT WITH SERIES OF SUGGESTIONS TO COMBAT TERRORISM. REPS SUGGESTED THAT USG TAKE LEAD IN ORGANIZING PROTECTION OF US BUSINESSMEN AND THAT FOLLOWING STEPS FORM PART OF OVERALL PLAN:

A. A SECURITY EXPERT IN EMBASSY ADVISE US COMPANIES ON TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMEND APPROPRIATE MEASURES FOR SECURITY OF US CITIZENS. REPS EMPHASIZED US COMPANIES
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IN ARGENTINA WILLING TO PUT UP SIGNIFICANT SUMS FOR SUCH

PURPOSE.

B. USG PUT PRESSURE ON GOA TO PROVIDE ANTI- TERRORIST PROTECTION.

C. NOTED THAT US NARCOTICS AGENTS ACTIVE IN ARGENTINA, AND RECOMMENDED US INTELLIGENCE AGENTS PLAY SIMILAR ROLE, ADVISING GOA ON BEST METHODS TO COMBAT TERRORISM.

D. RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR PROTECTION OF US SCHOOL CHILDREN SINCE THEY MIGHT BE FUTURE TARGETS FOR KIDNAPPING.

2. AMBASSADOR MEYER AND DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS EXPLAINED FIRM USG POLICY ISEE HAS JUST MET FOR FIRST TIME AND HAS HAD ONLY PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS. LEGAL- JUDICIAL AND PUBLIC UTILITIES- ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEES HAVE MADE SOME PROGRESS ON TECHNICAL ISSUES. EDUCATION, CULTURAL AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE HAD MADE SOME TECHNICAL PROGRESS IN EDUCATION. IMPORT ECONOMIC XIHMCIAL COMMITTEE IS ALSO DEADLOCKED (PDRY DEP PRIM USHAYSH DID NOT SHOW UP FOR LAST ROUND IN SANAA). FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HAS DEFERRED FURTHER ACTION UNTIL CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE HAS SHOWN SOME PROGRESS. NO APPARENT PROGRESS IN HEALTH COMMITTEE.

4. OFFICIAL TIMETABLE REMAINS UNCHANGED. AL ASST SEC GEN YAFI APRIL 15 REITERATED JUNE DEADLINE FOR COMPLETING COMMITTEE WORK. REFERENDUM IS THEN SUPPOSED TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN JUNE AND SEPTEMBER ON AGREED CONSTITUTION. IF, HOWEVER, AS NOW SEEMS LIKELY, JUNE ARRIVES WITHOUT ANY SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS, OPTIMISTIC PUBLIC FACADE WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN.

5. IN SUM THERE SEEMS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD, DESPITE THE SCURRYING AND VERBIAGE, THAT 1973 WILL BE " YEAR OF DECISION" FOR YEMEN UNITY.
NEWTON

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.
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